

Medicaid Matters

Medicaid's Patient 1st program extended through December 2008

The Alabama Medicaid Agency has received approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to extend the Patient 1st program through December 31, 2008, making it possible for approximately 425,000 Alabama Medicaid recipients to continue receiving the benefits of a medical home.



Patient 1st is a primary care case management (PCCM) program which links eligible Medicaid recipients with a primary medical provider (PMP) who provides services directly or through referral to another provider. In addition, Patient 1st recipients may also benefit from several program enhancements, such as in-home monitoring for patients with chronic diseases.

"The goal of the Patient 1st program is to improve health care outcomes for Medicaid recipients by providing a medical home while containing the costs of providing quality health care," said Medical Services Division Director Kim Davis-Allen.

[Click here for more information on Alabama's Patient 1st program.](#)

Award recognizes Agency's efforts to reduce health disparities

The Alabama Medicaid Agency is one of three state Medicaid agencies recognized recently by the Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS) for its efforts to seek creative, outcome-based solutions to chronic health care problems in Alabama's Black Belt region. The Agency received notice of the CHCS Innovation Award December 14 in conjunction with the organization's Quality Summit in Miami. Medicaid programs in Virginia and Utah were also recognized by the organization.



The award includes a \$10,000 grant and technical assistance to implement a quality improvement project to improve health outcomes for diabetic patients in Perry County, located in west Alabama. The CHCS is a national non-profit organization devoted to improving the quality of health services for beneficiaries served by publicly financed care, especially those with chronic illnesses and disabilities.

Funds from the award will be used to develop and implement a community-based intervention project for Medicaid recipients in Perry County who have diabetes or are identified as being at risk for diabetes, according to Medicaid Medical Director Mary G. McIntyre, M.D. The project, to be done in collaboration with the efforts of the Black Belt Action Commission's Health Committee, will use a community-based participatory research approach in which community leaders, academicians and health officials share equally in the design of the intervention.

"This method increases buy-in, participation and ownership of a community program because it is developed by the community and its partners," said Dr. McIntyre. "We believe this approach will lead to a sustainable effort and a true grassroots approach."



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Stakeholders meet to learn about Medicaid transformation plans

More than 50 people representing state agencies, provider associations and other organizations met November 27 to learn more about the Agency's plans to transform the Alabama Medicaid program from one that is claims and process focused to one that emphasizes patient health outcomes.

Alabama is one of more than 40 states which submitted a proposal to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in September. CMS is expected to award approximately \$150 million in grants over a two-year period to transform state Medicaid operations early in 2007. Alabama's proposal is for \$7.6 million over the two-year period, according to Alabama Medicaid Chief of Staff Mary Hayes Finch.

"Historically, all Medicaid programs have been paper based and driven by the processing of claims," Finch said. "Now is the time to move toward a coordinated system that is patient centered and results oriented."

[Click here to view a copy of the grant proposal and the stakeholder presentation.](#)



Agency sponsors Christmas for 60 Montgomery-area residents

Kim Davis-Allen wears many hats throughout the year as Director of Medicaid's Medical Support Division, but the one she wears at Christmas time has an extra special meaning.



In what has become an Agency tradition, Agency employees raise funds and sponsor individuals, families and various groups during the holiday season to ensure that the spirit of Christmas is extended to as many in need as possible. Davis-Allen, who has chaired the project since its inception several years ago, emphasizes that the effort is a collaborative effort.

"This is one of the most rewarding aspects of my job and I appreciate all that the Agency's employees do to make Christmas a reality for these individuals," said Davis-Allen. "Whether it is by making a contribution, identifying those who need help, wrapping presents or delivering food boxes and gifts, this effort is truly a project that the entire Agency becomes involved with."

Since Davis-Allen took on the project several years ago, the project has grown exponentially in terms of money raised and the number of people helped. In 2006, employees raised over \$1600 and provided food, toiletries and gifts for 60 people, including 16 families and 20 participants of the New Hope Christian Church adult day care program for elderly and disabled individuals.

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